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RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000284

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TAGS: [ENRG](#) [EMIN](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [KGIT](#) [IAEA](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: CHARGES AGAINST ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSIONER STILL  
UNCLEAR

REF: KINSHASA 282

Classified By: EconOff W. Brafman for reasons 1.4 b/d/e.

11. (C) Pursuant to the arrest of the DRC's Atomic Energy Commission (CGEA) head and his assistant (reftel), there has still been no public release of the charges. Professor Fortunat Lumu, the CGEA Commissioner and director of Kinshasa's Nuclear Research Center (CREN-K) told EconOff late afternoon on March 8, however, that he and his colleague have been charged with the trafficking of about 100 bars and "casques" of nuclear materials and that a Kinshasa trial court was still holding him and his colleague. (Note: EconOff could not reach Lumu the morning of March 9. End note.)

12. (C) Similarly, a magistrate told Political LES the charges against the two officials are over the illegal sale of uranium and related acts of forgery and embezzlement. The magistrate said the pretrial investigation is confidential and thus no specifics can be made public. A Reuters reporter told EconOff that when he and the DRC BBC reporter showed up at CREN-K for a tour on March 8, they were denied entry on the grounds that the facility is now a crime scene.

13. (SBU) Lumu denies the charges and blames the new Scientific Research Minister Sylvanus Mushi for initiating the proceedings, although he did not offer any reasons for Mushi's actions. He also said the case has no connection to the 2006 agreement the CGEA made with Brinkley Mining. He said the prior Ministers of Mines and Scientific Research approved the agreement and that the presidency has the document but has not yet approved it. The Brinkley officials with whom EconCouns spoke said the company does not know whether a connection exists between the arrests and their deal. Minister Mushi is reportedly holding a press conference regarding the matter on March 10.

14. (C) Lumu's assistant, however, said he thinks authorities do suspect Lumu of corruption in signing the agreement with Brinkley but are still searching for evidentiary support. The assistant said the agreement signed with Brinkley Mining is worth USD 50 million and resulted in the creation two companies in the DRC, one of which Lumu will lead. He also claimed Lumu's income appears to have recently increased, nothing the purchase of an expensive new vehicle.

COMMENT  
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15. (C) Post has no evidence of the transfer any radioactive materials from the DRC's nuclear research center. Nor is there any basis to believe Lumu or his assistant had control over any radioactive materials beyond that contained in the

reactor fuel rods. More likely, these arrests could be one of the first attempts of the newly-installed government to combat corruption by targeting officials responsible for questionable deals, this one involving supposed rights to mine uranium, an area in which Lumu had no responsibilities or authority. End comment.

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